

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-16 and 20-26 are pending in this application. Claims 17-19 and 27-30 have been canceled. The claims have been amended to remove improper multiple dependencies. No new matter has been added by way of the above amendments. Applicants respectfully request an early and favorable Office Action on the merits.

**Conclusion**

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Kecia J. Reynolds (Reg. No. 47,021) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

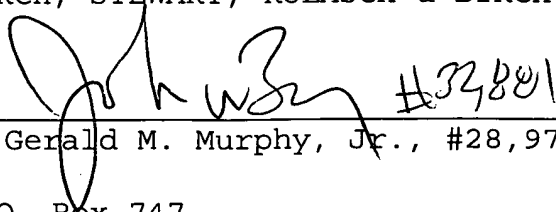
If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees


required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By

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Attachment(s): Disk copy of the Sequence Listing